



## ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional)

Monthly Report -- Bangkok Bureau

FROM:

Chief, Operations Group

EXTENSION

NO.

DATE

June 1988

STAT

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

DATE

RECEIVED

FORWARDED

OFFICER'S INITIALS

COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

1.

AC/Ops

22 JUL 1988

2.

3.

C/E&amp;PS

4.

DD/FBIS

5.

D/FBIS

6.

7.

PO/RA

8.

SA/CD

9.

10.

C/AS

11.

C/B&amp;F/AS

12.

13.

14.

C/AG

15.

Exec. Reg.

26 June 1988  
FBIS-3215-88

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, Foreign Broadcast Information Service  
THROUGH : Chief, Operations Group  
SUBJECT : Monthly Report -- Bangkok Bureau -- June 1988

## I. GENERAL

1. Thailand's 24 July elections continued to dominate the media throughout the month as reports again surfaced of the possibility of a military coup. The latest coup reports came about after railway workers went on strike over wage demands and to protest the privatization of the national railroads, and 140 other unions threatened a general strike in support of the railway men. If it had taken place, the general walkout would have virtually paralyzed the kingdom, as the unions represented all facets of the economy from communications to the national lottery. Fortunately, Prime Minister Prem Tinsulanon was able to end the 5-day railway strike on 26 June by merely threatening to take firm action against the strikers, and the other unions then decided to call off their walkout.

Meanwhile, authoritative government sources claimed that two Army colonels instigated the railway strike and attempted to get the other unions to join in so as to cause disruption to precipitate conditions for a military coup d'etat. The purpose was allegedly to make it impossible for Prem to return to power by canceling the 24 July general elections and having a new constitution drafted. According to those same sources, the prime minister knows the names of the two colonels, but by month's end they still had not been identified. The Army high command has denied any links to the strike and claims no knowledge of any coup.

## II. OPERATIONS

### A. Monitorial/Editorial

1. The Vietnamese Unit's coverage of the Vietnamese National Assembly 22-28 June went off without a hitch as Hanoi radio broadcast just enough material on the proceedings each day for the unit to handle without creating any backlogs. Highlights of the event were Do Muoi's elevation to the premiership, his inaugural speech and press conference, and a 37-minute announcer-read speech by General Secretary Nguyen Van Linh on the state of the Vietnamese economy.

2. Burma kept the IBM unit occupied when student-instigated clashes, initially reported in March, flared up again, leading authorities to impose a 6 pm to 6 am curfew in the Rangoon environs, ban public gatherings, and close schools in an attempt to diffuse the situation. In the most serious incident thus far, Burmese media reported that 6 police and 3 rioters were killed on 21 June in clashes between the public security forces and student-led demonstrators. The crisis is expected to continue, with AFP reporting that the clashes had spread to the port city of Pegu, some 50 miles north of Rangoon.

#### B. Lateral Services

1. An embassy consumer called to thank the person responsible for the Southeast Asian acronym list complied by Indonesian Monitor [ ] and asked that her praise for this list be passed on to the "highest echelons."

25X1

2. An AmEmbassy Jakarta political officer called 17 June requesting the BFN on an item containing an interview with the Indonesian vice president filed 2 days earlier. The bureau was able to come up with two such items and refiled them.

3. At Headquarters' request, the bureau filed Moscow in Burmese and Tamil items reporting on U.S.-Iran arms talks in Ankara.

4. Numerous requests were fulfilled from the Embassy Political Section on the ongoing Thai political situation and the status of the Vietnamese National Assembly session.

#### C. Technical

1. Bang Ping experienced problems with the elevation function of the ROSET analyst antenna on 9 June. At lower elevation settings the antenna would stick. The problem was traced to the brass gear that drives the elevation shaft. As a temporary fix the gear was cleaned and reseated. A replacement gear is on site but we are awaiting an answer from HQs about the new 7.5 meter installation. If approved, the new antenna can be used as a backup while the analyst dish is being repaired. Repairs will take approximately 1-2 weeks.

2. The microwave system between bureau and Bang Ping malfunctioned on 29 June. The problem was traced to a transistor in the modulator unit. The defective part was bypassed and the modulator is now working with reduced output. A replacement transistor has been ordered from HQs.

3. New equipment: The bureau now has a new Toyota four-door sedan, color white, MV31569, MDL RX72R-XEPES, Engine No. 22R-2539647, Chassis No. R72-0028365

## D. Cruising

1. Thai TV Color Channel 3 and the Mass Communications Organization of Thailand (MCOT) Channel 9 officially began their satellite telecasts 1 June on the 60E Intelsat with good reception. PAL is the color system the two channels use.

2. The Analyst dish was positioned on the 80E Soviet satellite 22-28 June for possible passfeeds of the Vietnamese National Assembly but none were observed.

## III. ADMINISTRATION

### A. Personnel

1. Senior Editor [ ] and family arrived PCS 3 June. STAT

2. Senior Editor [ ] and family departed the bureau 21 June on PCS to Headquarters. STAT

3. Bureau Chief [ ] and family arrived PCS 27 June. Tom replaces [ ], who retired on 30 April. STAT  
STAT

4. Junior Editor [ ] arrived PCS 28 June. Tim replaces [ ], who departs 16 July. STAT  
SIAI

5. The Bureau penthouse was the site of a hail and farewell party 17 June to meet newly arrived Senior Editor [ ] and family and bid farewell to Senior Editor [ ] and his family. STAT  
STAT

6. Prompted by the list of Soviet commentators published by FBIS in 1977, Vietnamese Unit Chief [ ] began perusing the various Vietnamese publications the bureau receives, and following 10 years of effort, has come up with a 34-page list of Vietnamese commentators and their areas of expertise. The list has proved to be a boon to the unit, and is eagerly awaited by AG. ✓ STAT

7. The bureau's own admin assistant, [ ], was personally presented with a certificate by Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakkri Sirinthorn at the embassy compound on 13 June. The princess was at the embassy to dedicate the Sala Thai built on the embassy compound with donations from embassy personnel in honor of the King's 60th birthday last December, and honored [ ] for her part in raising the funds. STAT

8. The following personnel received promotions or QSI's during the month: STAT

Vietnamese Unit Chief [ ] a QSI to  
FBN-11/11.

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B. Visits

To The Bureau:

1. [ ] Prod Group employee, and wife of Daily Report  
Editor [ ] paid a visit to the bureau 3 June while on private  
travel to Bangkok.

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2. [ ], Thai/Vietnam program organizer at the BBC's  
Bush House, paid an informal visit to the bureau 7 June and briefed  
bureau personnel on her impressions of Vietnam following a just  
concluded two-week tour there, during which she met with several  
high-ranking officials.

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3. When [ ] chief of Division 9 of NIA, asked if  
he could bring an "old friend" by on 14 June for an informal visit,  
the bureau had no idea it would be receiving such a distinguished  
guest. The old friend turned out to be [ ] former college  
professor, Pan Vonmatee, who went on to become ambassador to West  
Germany and the United Kingdom, Thailand's representative to ASEAN,  
and ultimately permanent secretary to the Foreign Ministry. Now  
retired, Pan still serves the Thai Government as advisor to the  
foreign minister and as a member of the Foreign Ministry's  
International Studies Center. He was also accompanied by Vivat  
Kultalcher and Udomphon Nunnart, first and second secretaries,  
respectively, of the Policy and Planning Division of the Office of  
the Permanent Secretary of the Foreign Ministry. Pan expressed  
appreciation for the briefing and tour of the bureau and Bang Ping  
and requested a subscription to the East Asia Daily report on behalf  
of the Foreign Ministry.

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4. FED Deputy Chief [ ] and LEC team members [ ]  
[ ] TDYed 16-24 June to  
conduct post-FBA inspection/review.

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5. State Regional Medical Doctor Simon Viss toured the bureau  
and Bang Ping on 24 June.

From The Bureau:

1. Cambodian Monitor [ ] to Headquarters 13 June  
for one day's TDY while on private travel.

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2. Vietnamese Unit Chief [ ]  
[ ] to Headquarters 23 June for one day's TDY while on EOT and  
private travel, respectively.

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3. [redacted], wife of Deputy Chief [redacted]  
visited Headquarters on 23 June while on private travel in the  
States.

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[redacted]  
Acting Chief, Bangkok Bureau